



# *After Dark*

## **MSU's Astronomy Newsletter**

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### *Upcoming Astronomical Horizons Lectures*

All lectures are free to the public and given at Abrams Planetarium, starting at 7:30pm

#### **OCTOBER 18: PLUTO AND OTHER NON-PLANETS**

**Professor Edwin Loh**

**In 1930 Clyde Tombaugh was acclaimed the discoverer of a 9th planet in the solar system, Pluto. It was the first major planet to be discovered by an American, and only the third to have been found since the invention of the telescope. However, in 2006, a meeting of the International Astronomical Union revoked Pluto's status as a major planet -- an action that displeased many, especially in the United States. This talk will explore the issues behind the Pluto controversy, and investigate the properties of other solar system objects that are as big, or almost as big, as the once ninth planet.**



Dwarf planets Eris (above), Pluto (below) and Ceres are compared with the Earth.

# NOVEMBER 15: THE WORLD'S GREATEST TELESCOPES PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Professor Mark Voit

The telescope that Galileo turned on the skies in 1609 revolutionized astronomy, but is a toy compared to even the telescopes of amateur astronomers today. In the four centuries since Galileo, telescopes have grown hugely in size and complexity, their locations have moved from sea level to mountaintops, and they have soared into space. The pioneering telescopes of the past, the cutting edge telescopes of today, and the dream telescopes of tomorrow are discussed.

## More upcoming Astronomical Horizons lectures:

JAN 17: Stellar Life After Death: Violent Explosions on White Dwarf Stars  
Dr. Laura Chomiuk

FEB 21: Black Holes and Globular Clusters: Sparkling Hosts of Frozen Stars  
Prof. Jay Strader

Lectures for March and April will be announced in January.

## CAMPUS OBSERVATORY PUBLIC VIEWING NIGHTS

The MSU Campus Observatory opens its doors to the public two nights per month, *weather permitting*. This is your chance to look at planets, star clusters, and other beautiful celestial objects using the 24-inch telescope and also a number of smaller telescopes. Knowledgeable professional and amateur astronomers will be on hand. But come only if the sky is clear, and dress warmly. For a map, see [www.pa.msu.edu/astro/observ](http://www.pa.msu.edu/astro/observ).

### MSU Campus Observatory Open House

Weather permitting, the next open houses will occur from 9-11pm on Friday and Saturday nights, Sept. 21 and 22, and also from 9-11pm on Friday and Saturday, October 19 and 20.

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